

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 TRSY-02 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10
IO-13 JUSE-00 NSAE-00 CTME-00 SNM-05 ICA-11
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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3218
INFO AMEMBASSY RANGOON

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 11169

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR, TH, BM
SUBJECT: THAI-BURMESE NARCOTICS COOPERATION

1. AT CLOSE OF CALL APR 17 BY MISSION NCU OFFICER ON MG CHAWALIT YOTMANI, CHIEF OF THE OFFICE OF THE POLICE NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION CENTER, U SAW WIN, OF OFFICE OF UNPDAC BURMA, JOINED GROUP FOUR LUNCH. U SAW MADE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS OF GENERAL INTEREST ON THAI-BURMESE NARCOTICS COOPERATION.

2. U SAW CAME TO BANGKOK APR 15 TO SPEND A WEEK IN THAILAND, OBSERVING THE OPERATIONS OF UNPDAC IN THAILAND IN CROP SUBSTITUTION FIELD. HE SAID HE HAD BEEN IN THE BURMESE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE AND HAD BEEN BURMESE CHARGE IN BANGKOK IN THE 1950'S.

3. GENERAL CHAWALIT REPEATEDLY STRESSED NEED FOR THAI AND BURMESE GOVERNMENTS TO TALK WITH EACH OTHER AND TO COOPERATE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE GROWTH, PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION, AND USE OF OPIUM AND OPIATES. U SAW WIN AGREED THAT A DIALOGUE WAS NECESSARY AND EXPECTS SUCH DISCUSSIONS AND COOPERATION TO MATERIALIZE OVER THE NEXT YEAR OR SO. HE SAID HE CONTINUES TO URGE MORE REGIONAL COOPERATION IN
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CONTACTS WITH HIS FRIENDS IN THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT.

4. U SAW SAID THAT HE HAS HEARD REPORTS THAT BCP WAS CONTACTING FARMERS AMONG BURMESE MINORITY GROUPS AND PURCHASING RAW OPIUM FROM THEM WHICH, AFTER SOME DEGREE OF PROCESSING, WAS SHIPPED TO NORTHEAST THAILAND VIA THE MEKONG RIVER. GENERAL CHAWALIT STATED THAT HE HAD REPORTS OF AN

INCREASE IN THE NARCOTICS TRAFFIC IN NORTHEAST THAILAND AND OF POSSIBLE SMUGGLING TO NARCOTICS INTO THAILAND THROUGH THE NORTHEAST. HE ADDED THAT HE HAD SEEN NO REPORTS CONCERNING BCP PURCHASES OF OPIUM FOR SUCH TRAFFIC. U SAW SAID THAT THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT WAS FAIRLY CERTAIN THAT THERE WAS AN ACCOMODATION BETWEEN THE VARIOUS INSURGENT GROUPS IN BURMA IN TERMS OF THE OPIUM TRAFFIC, DESPITE THEIR OPPOSING POLITICAL VIEWS.

5. ON "FREE TRADE" ACROSS THAI-BURMA BORDER IN THE NORTH, U SAW SAID THAT SUBSTANTIAL QUANTITIES (NO AMOUNT MENTIONED) OF BURMESE COFFEE WERE FINDING THEIR WAY TO THAILAND. HE ACCEPTED SUCH TRADE AS REASONABLE AS POOR TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES MADE IT UNREALISTIC TO TRADE BETWEEN RANGOON AND BANGKOK. HE FELT THAT THERE SHOULD BE LEGAL RECOGNITION OF SUCH TRADE BY THE THAI AND BURMESE GOVERNMENTS.

6. U SAW NOTED THAT UNPDAC EFFORTS IN BURMA ARE HANDLED EXCLUSIVELY BY BURMESE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES (PRIMARILY THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE), WITH UN PROVIDING ONLY COMMODITY SUPPORT. UN DOES NOT REPORT NOT CONTROL IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAM. GENERAL CHAWALIT SAID HE WAS AWARE OF THIS SITUATION AND COMMENTED THAT IT WAS INTERESTING THAT UN HAD INFORMED THAI GOVERNMENT THAT SIMILAR PROCEDURE WAS NOT AUTHORIZED WHEN THAI SOUGHT SUCH PROGRAM ASSISTANCE.
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WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

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